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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, hallowed be Your Name. Today, empower our lawmakers to run with patience the race that is set before them, looking to You, the author and finisher of our faith. Keep them from discouragement as You help them to be persistent in their efforts to meet today's challenges with faith and trust in You. Sustain them ever in Your grace and bestow upon them Your abundant Spirit.

Lord, give uncommon wisdom to the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction. As its members strive to forge a deficit reduction plan, grant them wisdom and courage for the living of these days.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable TOM UDALL led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, October 13, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, the Senate will be in morning business until noon. The Republicans will control the first 30 minutes and the majority will control the next 30 minutes. At noon, the Senate will be in executive session to consider the Nathan, Hickey, and Forrest nominations. They are all nominated to be U.S. district court judges. We expect two rollcall votes at around 2 p.m. in relation to these nominations.

Additionally, there is a joint meeting of Congress today at 4 p.m. with the President of South Korea. Senators will gather on the floor at 3:40 p.m. to proceed to the House. We will do that together.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

WELCOMING THE PRESIDENT OF SOUTH KOREA

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, later today, Senators will have the opportunity to hear from South Korean President Lee, and I know we all look forward to it.

South Korea is a stalwart ally that enjoys a flourishing economy. It is a shining example of how embracing democracy and free market principles can transform a society for the good.

Imagine, in 50 years, they went from a civil war to a military dictatorship to an evolving democracy and on the economic side to a thriving capitalist country that has the 13th largest economy in the world—from a country that was a recipient of foreign aid and Peace Corps volunteers to a country with its own foreign aid program and its own peace corps—all of that in 50 years, right on the same peninsula with one of the last Stalinist regimes in the world. It is a great success story that the United States has had an awful lot to do with promoting.

The South Korean Free Trade Agreement we passed overwhelmingly last night on a bipartisan basis will only make our two economies stronger. Our already strong alliance will be even stronger.

These agreements should serve as an example of the kind of bipartisan legislation Congress should be focused on right now.

Many of us have been amazed to witness, as I indicated earlier, the rapid growth and evolution of South Korea—truly a remarkable accomplishment.

So we welcome this great friend of the United States to our shores. We hope he and his wife have a memorable trip.

As we face together the threat of North Korea and the rapid changes occurring in the strategic balance in Northeast Asia, we look forward to an even stronger alliance with South Korea in the years to come.

I yield the floor.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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